



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION  
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MINUTES

RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION  
December 14, 2005

I. MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Robert E. Cusack  
Mr. Robert Goff  
Mr. John Grosvenor, AIA  
Mr. Michael Hebert, NR Review Board  
Mr. Karst Hoogeboom  
Dr. Patrick Malone  
Dr. Ronald Onorato  
Dr. Patricia Rubertone  
Mr. Frederick C. Williamson, Chairman & SHPO

STAFF PRESENT

Mr. Jeffrey Emidy, National Register Assistant  
Dr. Richard Greenwood, Principal Historian  
Ms. Pamela Kennedy, Deputy Director  
Mr. Edward F. Sanderson, Executive Director

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. Joseph Dias, representing Mr. Michael Sullivan, Director DEM  
Dr. James Garman, NR Review Board  
Ms. Patrice O'Malley Hagan  
Mr. John O'Brien, Chief of Statewide Planning  
Mr. Robert J. McKenna  
Dr. E. Pierre Morenon  
Mr. Daniel DeDentro, State Building Commissioner  
Mr. Michael Sullivan, Department of Environmental Management  
Mr. Michael McMahon, Economic Development Corporation

GUESTS

Ms. Katherine Cavanaugh, consultant  
Mr. Edward Connors, consultant  
Mr. Daniel Peloquin, RA  
Mr. William Haase, Westerly Town Planner

## II. AGENDA

### 1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 AM, Mr. Williamson, Chairman, presiding.

### 2. Minutes of November 9, 2005

On a motion by Mr. Goff, seconded by Mr. Hoozeboom, the Commission

VOTED unanimously to approve the Minutes of November 9, 2005.

### 3. Executive Director's Report

a) Mr. Sanderson reported on the State Preservation Grants announcement event in Newport.

### 4. National Register Review Board

Ms. Kennedy reported on recent National Register listings by the National Park Service:  
St. Ann's Church, Woonsocket (national level of significance)  
Dunmere, Narragansett  
Lewis-Card-Perry House, Westerly  
Pawtuxet Valley Mills, Coventry  
Nicholson File Company, Providence  
Providence Steel Company, Providence

#### Final National Register Approvals

North End Historic District, Westerly

Ms. Kennedy presented information about this large district comprising approximately 400 structures. Historically the North End was a mixed-use neighborhood settled mostly around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The district is predominantly residential, but also includes retail shops (a number of houses have commercial shop fronts), a silk mill, and a high school. Irish and English immigrants arrived before 1900, and after 1900 the neighborhood became one of Westerly's primary Italian immigrant neighborhoods. Some physical features such as masonry garden walls, gardens, and shop fronts reflect this period of development. While some changes have been made to many of the buildings, few buildings have been entirely removed from the district, and it continues to convey its overall significance and sense of place. Mr. Grosvenor noted the general consistency of scale of buildings in the district. Dr. Malone and Dr. Onorato expressed interest in landscape features in the neighborhood.

Mr. Haase, Westerly Town Planner, reported that the Town supports the nomination and in fact funded preparation of the nomination. He noted that local residents appreciate the cultural significance of the North End, particularly to Italian immigrant heritage. The Town hopes that National Register listing will bring recognition and encourage protection of the district's historical character. The Town will encourage rehabilitation of buildings and plans to assist first-time homeowners in the district.

Following discussion, on a motion by Dr. Onorato , seconded by Mr. Goff, the Commission

VOTED unanimously to approve the nomination.

Hope Webbing Mill, Main Street, Pawtucket

Mr. Emidy presented information about the property which is significant for industrial architecture and the history of manufacturing in Pawtucket. The Hope Webbing Company was founded in 1833, and the present mill complex dates from 1892-1914. The brick mill is 432 feet long along Main Street with two 4-story towers. In 1923 this was the largest narrow fabric mill in the world. The property is slated for rehabilitation for housing, artists' studios, and commercial uses.

Dr. Malone noted the importance of the narrow fabric industry in Rhode Island, including webbing, straps, and bandages. Following discussion, on a motion by Dr. Malone, seconded by Dr. Onorato, the Commission

VOTED to approve the nomination. Mr. Grosvenor did not participate in discussion or vote.

Beaman & Smith Factory, Gordon Avenue, Providence

Dr. Greenwood presented information about the property. Beaman & Smith were manufacturers of precision machines. The complex dates to 1898 and 1917, and consists of two- and four-story buildings with steel frames manufactured by the Berlin Iron Bridge Company. The 1917 portion is concrete with mushroom columns. Following discussion, on a motion by Dr. Onorato , seconded by Dr. Malone, the Commission

VOTED unanimously to approve the nomination.

Philmont Worsted Mill, Social Street, Woonsocket

Mr. Emidy presented information about the property, a 1919 3-story brick mill established by Belgian immigrants to manufacture fine worsted and mohair yarns. The mill reflects the importance of textile manufacturing and immigration in Woonsocket. Following discussion, on a motion by Dr. Onorato , seconded by Mr. Grosvenor, the Commission

VOTED unanimously to approve the nomination.

Preliminary presentation of Watson House, 98 Locust Avenue, Portsmouth was postponed at the owner's request.

5. Other Business: There was no other business.
6. Next meeting date: The next regular meeting of the Commission will be Wednesday, January 11, 2006.
7. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 11:18 AM.

Minutes recorded by,

Edward F. Sanderson, Executive Director